

Press Note.

Disposal of lands to Political Sufferers.

Representations having been received for the grant of lands as one of the measures of relief to political sufferers, a Committee was constituted in Government Order No. R. 90300-302—L. R. 387-50-1, dated 2nd December 1950, to formulate specific proposals for making land grants to *bonafide* Political sufferers and affording relief to them. After a careful consideration of the several recommendations of the Committee, it was directed in Government Order No. R. 10425-35—L. R. 387-50-2, dated 24th December 1951, that each political sufferer might be granted, on application made in this behalf, an extent of two to five acres of wet or dry bagayet land; or five to ten acres of dry land and that lands released from date groves in the Districts of Kolar, Tumkur, Chitaldrug and Saimoga, where prohibition has been introduced, might be made available for disposal to these applicants. The Deputy Commissioners of the concerned Districts have been duly instructed to take suitable action as per rules framed in this behalf.

The cases of several individual applicants, that came up before Government, prior to the issue of the Government Order specified in para 1, have been duly considered on their individual merits, and a total extent of 139 acres 20 guntas has been granted to 22 applicants so far.

(P. N. No. 274—16-1-1952).

Press Note.

Application of Controls.

The Mysore State has a population of about 8 millions. The most important staple foodgrain of the people is ragi which is consumed by about 70 per cent of the population (mostly rural) and the next most important foodgrain is rice. In years of good rainfall, Mysore is more or less self-sufficient in respect of millets, but has been always deficit in rice in the pre-war years by about 50,000 tons or 17 per cent of rice consumption. This shortage was intensified during the war years by two factors. A large number of industrial concerns were engaged in war supply work, employing a large labour force and there was also a large number of military works establishments and civil personnel for whom food had to be conserved and supplied.

The first step in the direction of control was taken on 7th September 1939, four days after the declaration of war, when the Government constituted a Control Advisory Committee of officials and non-officials for regulating the prices of essential foodgrains and other food articles. This was followed up by the formation of Price Advisory Committees in all the districts and a foodgrain control order was passed in July 1942.

Consequent on the acute shortage of foodstuffs and the sudden spiralling up of their prices, control over the prices and distribution of essential foodgrains in the State was undertaken for the first time in 1943. The first phase of requisitioning of surplus foodgrains undertaken under the order of 8th August 1943 was soon followed by a scheme of monopoly procurement under the Harvest (Acquisition) Order of December 1943 with State wide rationing as its corollary. Under this order the entire surplus of the harvest of all holdings which was calculated to be above the sub-economic or deficit level were purchased by Government. All holders of non-deficit holdings were compelled to sell to Government, surplus produce from their holding, over and above the reasonable needs of their families and their dependents as well as their seed requirements. The grains included under this order were paddy, all millets—ragi, jowar, bajra, etc., and wheat. The prices at which the grains were to be purchased were fixed with due regard to the then existing cost of living and the increased cost of cultivation. This scheme of Government monopoly in trading in staple foodgrains was replaced by a more comprehensive order of 1944. The mopping up and taking over of this surplus have reduced, if not altogether extinguished, smuggling and blackmarketing activities. Supplies of foodgrains within the State were supplemented by imports from other parts of India to make up the deficit. Government Sales Depots were opened all over the State,

both in the rural and urban areas, and the services of co-operative societies, municipalities and village panchayats were utilised wherever possible for the distribution of foodgrains. Statutory rationing was introduced in the Cities of Bangalore, Mysore and Kolar Gold Field.

In December 1947, the policy of gradual decontrol was accepted by the Government of India for being carried out and completed before the end of 1948. Agreeably to this and in view of the comparatively favourable millet position at that time, procurement of millets was abandoned in February 1948 and all restrictions on its movement removed. Distribution of the Government stocks of millets was however, continued throughout the State till the end of June 1948 in order to avoid hardship to the public. As time passed, pressure from the public for further relaxation of controls became insistent. As the stocks of paddy acquired and rice allotted from imports were estimated to just meet the commitments till the end of 1948, it was decided to decontrol paddy and to abandon its procurement from April 1948. Distribution of rice through Government Agency was however continued on the same scale as before. In the early part of 1948, control over sugar, jaggery, onions, tamarind, chillies, horsegram, charcoal and kerosene oil was removed and the "Controlled Foodgrains Transport Order, 1943" and the "Foodgrains Control Order, 1942" were repealed. Although Government decided to abolish statutory rationing in all areas in the State except in the important Cities of Bangalore, Civil Station, Mysore, Kolar Gold Field and Davangere from 1st July 1948, still as the open market prices were rising, it was considered essential to continue distribution in the rationed and non-rationed areas also, more or less in the same lines as before.

Contrary to what was expected, decontrol brought on an abnormal rise in the prices of foodgrains all over India and the Government of India decided to re-impose controls and directed all State Government, that, by October 1949, the position regarding procurement and distribution as existed prior to decontrol should be achieved. Accordingly, this Government had to re-impose controls and revert to monopoly procurement more or less on the lines as were in force prior to decontrol by promulgating in November 1948, the Articles of Food Acquisition (Harvest) Order, 1948. With the re-imposition of controls, the purchase prices were slightly stepped up by striking a mean between the open market prices during the period of decontrol and the control prices in the preceding period. This order was continued till November 1949, when as a result of the experience gained in its working, a revised order was issued on 21st November 1949, incorporating the following modifications:—

- (i) Abolition of exemptions from surrender of food grains previously allowed to certain classes of holders.
- (ii) Reduction in the allowance for domestic consumption to cultivators from 1.2 lbs. to 1 lb. per adult per day in line with the All-India scales.
- (iii) Increased allowance for farm labourers and seed purposes.

This order is being continued unchanged under the Essential Supplies (Temporary Powers) Act, 1950, promulgated by the Indian Parliament and extended to all States including Part B States with effect from 17th August 1950.

At present the entire surpluses of growers, i.e., over and above their requirements, mainly in paddy, ragi and jola are taken over by Government at prices fixed from year to year, in consultation with the Central Government and distributed to non-growers and insufficient growers all over the State. As the state is deficit in foodgrains as has been amply impressed on the public time and again, foodgrains as shown undermentioned were imported to meet the deficit. The State continues to be deficit in foodgrains in spite of the concessions, facilities and encouragement afforded to the raiyats in the course of Grow More Food Scheme. Imports are uncertain and undependable as they are not available when needed most. It would be most hazardous to decontrol foodgrains now, as it is sure to result in a steep rise in the prices and bring in acute scarcity. Added to this, the adverse seasonal conditions in